An important strategy of expansion consists of development of institutional capacity in all institutions with special focus on backward, rural, remote areas and small towns. Resources permitting, Government is considering to establish 30 new Central Universities and to provide some assistance to the State Governments, to incentivise them to establish at least one college in each district which has a low GER, during the Eleventh Plan period.

Abolition of NCTE

173. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:
SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to do away with the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) by repealing the NCTE Act, 1993; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) With a view to assessing whether NCTE has fulfilled its mandate, a Review Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Sudeep Banerjee, former Adviser, Ministry of Human Resource Development. The Committee has *inter alia*, recommended that the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Act, 1993 may be repealed. The recommendations are under examination of the Government.

Co-operation between India and Pakistan in Education

174. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE;
SHRI VINAY KATIYAR:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have agreed to gear up for major cooperation in the field of education which could result in exchange of books between NCERT and National Book Foundation, Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to share the expertise and experience of the two countries in the fields of elementary, secondary and adult education;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have decided to explore possibility of exhange of experiences between the NCERT and National Book Foundation, Pakistan and to reproduction of textbooks; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the Government, so far, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (f) A Working Group on